

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TAIPEI 02283 01 OF 02 140429Z
ACTION EA-12

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R 140443Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
TO USICA WASHDC
INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
SECSTATE WASHDC 7081

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 02283

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E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJ: HIGHLIGHTS

1. ATMOSPHERICS:

- PRESIDENT CARTER AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE BOTH MADE FRONTPAGE IN LOCAL PRESS THIS WEEK. CARTER'S REPLY TO QUESTION ON CHINA POLICY AT Q&A SESSION WITH ASNE MEMBERS WIDELY PLAYED, STRESSING COMMENT THAT WHILE U.S. OR PRC IN NO "BIG HURRY" PRESIDENT HOPED THAT "OVER PERIOD OF MONTHS" HOPES EXPRESSED IN SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE WOULD BE REALIZED. IN FOLLOW-UP REPORT, CHINA TIMES REPORTED "STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL" AS "GREATLY SURPRISED" IF NORMALIZATION COULD BE REALIZED IN NEXT FEW MONTHS AND STATED THERE WERE NO BASIC CHANGES IN NORMALIZATION EFFORTS. OFFICIAL REPORTEDLY THOUGHT QUESTION ON CHINA POLICY UNEXPECTED AND ANSWER GIVEN WITHOUT CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, BUT OFFICIAL
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PAGE 02 TAIPEI 02283 01 OF 02 140429Z

ADMITTED "MONTHS" MIGHT BE BETTER WORD THAN "WEEKS" OR "YEARS." CHINA TIMES (530,000) BANNERED HOLBROOKE'S REMARKS ON CHINA POLICY AT NEWS BRIEFING FOR ASIAN AND PACIFIC CORRESPONDENTS ON TOUR OF U.S. MILITARY BASES. ACCORDING TO REPORT FROM WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT, HOLBROOKE TOLD GROUP U.S. "PLACES HIGH IMPORTANCE" ON INTERESTS OF ROC PEOPLE IN PURSUING

POLICY OF NORMALIZATION. REPORT SAID HOLBROOKE CONSIDERED STRATEGIC BALANCE IN EAST ASIA AND NORTH PACIFIC "NORMAL SITUATION" AND U.S. HOPES BALANCE REMAINS UNCHANGED. ASKED IF NORMALIZATION WOULD UPSET BALANCE, REPORT SAID HOLBROOKE AVOIDED DIRECT ANSWER BUT REAFFIRMED U.S. CONCERN FOR INTERESTS OF ROC WHICH U.S. WOULD "VERY CAREFULLY" KEEP IN MIND DURING NORMALIZATION PROCESS. HOLBROOKE REPORTEDLY ADMITTED NORMALIZATION "DIFFICULT PROBLEM" AND U.S. MUST BE CAUTIOUS NOT TO ALARM REPORTERS ON CHINA QUESTIONS WHICH, ACCORDING TO REPORT, REFERRED TO RECENT REMARKS BY WOODCOCK. IN SEPARATE REPORT CHINA TIMES QUOTED DOS/EA SPOKESMAN CANNON AND "PENTAGON SPOKESMAN" AS SAYING U.S. HAD NO IMMEDIATE PLANS TO REDUCE AMERICAN TROOP STRENGTH ON TAIWAN. ACCORDING TO REPORT, PENTAGON PLACED TROOP STRENGTH AT 1,200 AS OF DECEMBER 1977. CONCERNING MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY, PENTAGON REPORTEDLY SAID U.S. TROOPS WOULD BE USED TO DEFEND TAIWAN IF ATTACKED AS LONG AS TREATY REMAINS VALID, BUT BELIEVED PRC INVASION UNLIKELY.

- CARTER'S WAKE FOREST SPEECH REAPPEARED IN THE NEWS IN CONNECTION WITH CHANGE SAID MADE IN PORTION CONCERNING MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATIES. UNITED DAILY NEWS (600,000) WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT REPORTED CHANGE AND SAID THIS "MAJOR REVISION" MADE TO AVOID UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 TAIPEI 02283 01 OF 02 140429Z

IMPRESSION CARTER DELIBERATELY NEGLECTED MENTIONING U.S.-ROC MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY.

- CHUNGLI ELECTION INCIDENT ALSO MADE BRIEF REAPPEARANCE IN PAPERS WITH NEWS THAT SENTENCE OF EIGHT DEFENDANTS ON TRIAL WILL BE HANDED DOWN BY TAIPEI DISTRICT COURT ON APRIL 17.

- ON ROMANIAN PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON, UNITED DAILY NEWS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT REPORTED SPOKESMAN CANNON DID NOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY THAT PRESIDENT CARRIED FORMULA WITH HIM FOR SOLVING NORMALIZATION PROBLEMS. CANNON ALSO REPORTED AS SAYING INCREASE IN U.S.-PRC TRADE EXPECTED.

- WHILE EDITORIAL COMMENT DEVOTED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, SPECIAL ANALYSES OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION BY WASHINGTON-BASED CORRESPONDENTS OF CHINA TIMES AND CNA ALSO APPEARED. CHINA TIMES ARTICLE SAW FAVORABLE SIGNS FOR ROC IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS: 1) CARTER'S CONGRATULATORY CABLES TO NEW ROC PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT "ALTHOUGH SOME CHINESE WERE NOT SATISFIED ... AS RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO GOVERNMENTS NOT MENTIONED;" AND 2) "MORE FLEXIBLE STAND TOWARD ROC DIPLOMATS."

ACCORDING TO "INFORMED SOURCE", ARTICLE SAID, ADMINISTRATION WILL AGREE TO NEW ROC AMBASSADOR BECAUSE CARTER DOES NOT WANT TROUBLE WITH ROC SUPPORTERS IN CONGRESS. LAST SUMMER, REPORT STATED, ADMINISTRATION PLANNED DOWNGRADING U.S. EMBASSY/TAIPEI, BUT PLAN NOW SHELVED FOR PRESENT. MORE IMPORTANT, ARTICLE SAID, NO HIGH RANKING U.S. OFFICIAL EAGER TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH PEKING AND NONE PLAN VISITING PRC THIS YEAR. CNA ANALYSIS REPORTED

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PAGE 01 TAIPEI 02283 02 OF 02 141047Z
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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 TAIPEI 2283

"AMERICAN POLITICAL OBSERVERS" THOUGHT CARTER WOULD BECOME MORE CONSERVATIVE AFTER MID-TERM ELECTIONS IN NOVEMBER AS NEXT CONGRESS WILL HAVE "MORE REPUBLICANS AND PROBLEMS." ALTHOUGH OBSERVERS DID NOT RULE OUT POSSIBLE BREAKTHROUGH IN NORMALIZATION BETWEEN NOVEMBER ELECTIONS AND PRESENTATION OF BUDGET IN JANUARY, AFTERWARDS CARTER EXPECTED TO BE TOO BUSY WITH "DETERIORATING INTERNATIONAL SITUATION." UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, ONE OBSERVER THOUGHT NORMALIZATION COULD WELL REMAIN IN "LUKEWARM STATE FOR REST OF CARTER'S FIRST TERM," ARTICLE REPORTED.

2. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES:

- FORMER FULBRIGHTER WALTER HUGINS CONDUCTED HIS THIRD AND CONCLUDING PROGRAM ON "HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE CARTER FOREIGN POLICY." PROGRAM IN FORM SEMINAR FOR TEN TAICHUNG MEDIA LEADERS. QUESTIONS LASTED 70 MINUTES BEYOND PREPARED PRESENTATION AND CONCERNED TOPICS SUCH AS CONFLICT BETWEEN HUMAN RIGHTS AND NATIONAL SECURITY, FACTORS IN CARTER'S BACKGROUND

MOTIVATING HIS INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS, STATEMENT
DEPARTMENT REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ROC. HUGINS
ALSO LED LUNCH DISCUSSION FOR SIX ARS MEMBERS AT
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PAGE 02 TAIPEI 02283 02 OF 02 141047Z

TUNGHAI UNIVERSITY AND DINNER DISCUSSION FOR GUESTS
INCLUDING NATIONAL CHUNGHSING UNIVERSITY DEAN CHANG
NAI-WEI, WHO HAS JUST WRITTEN BOOK ON HUMAN RIGHTS.
AYERS

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